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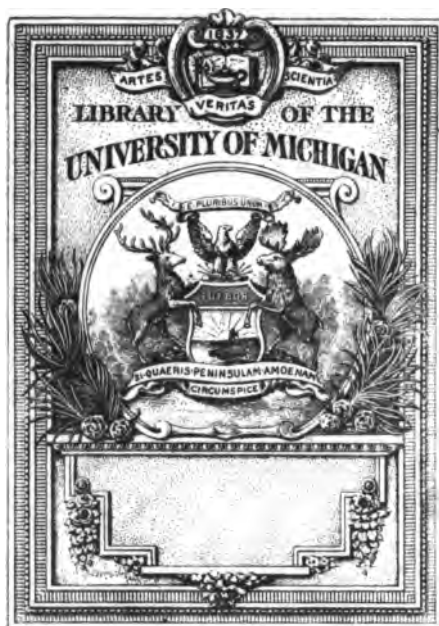
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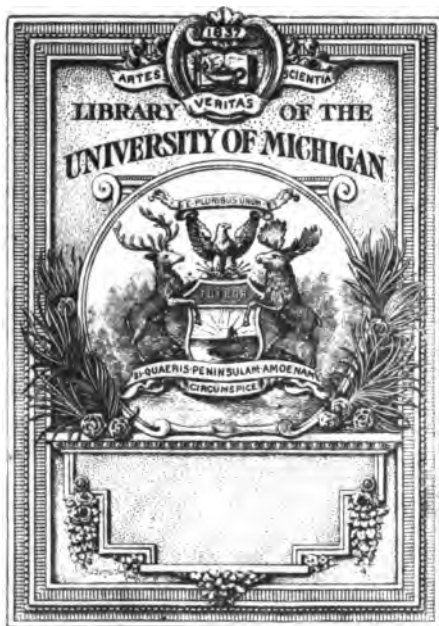
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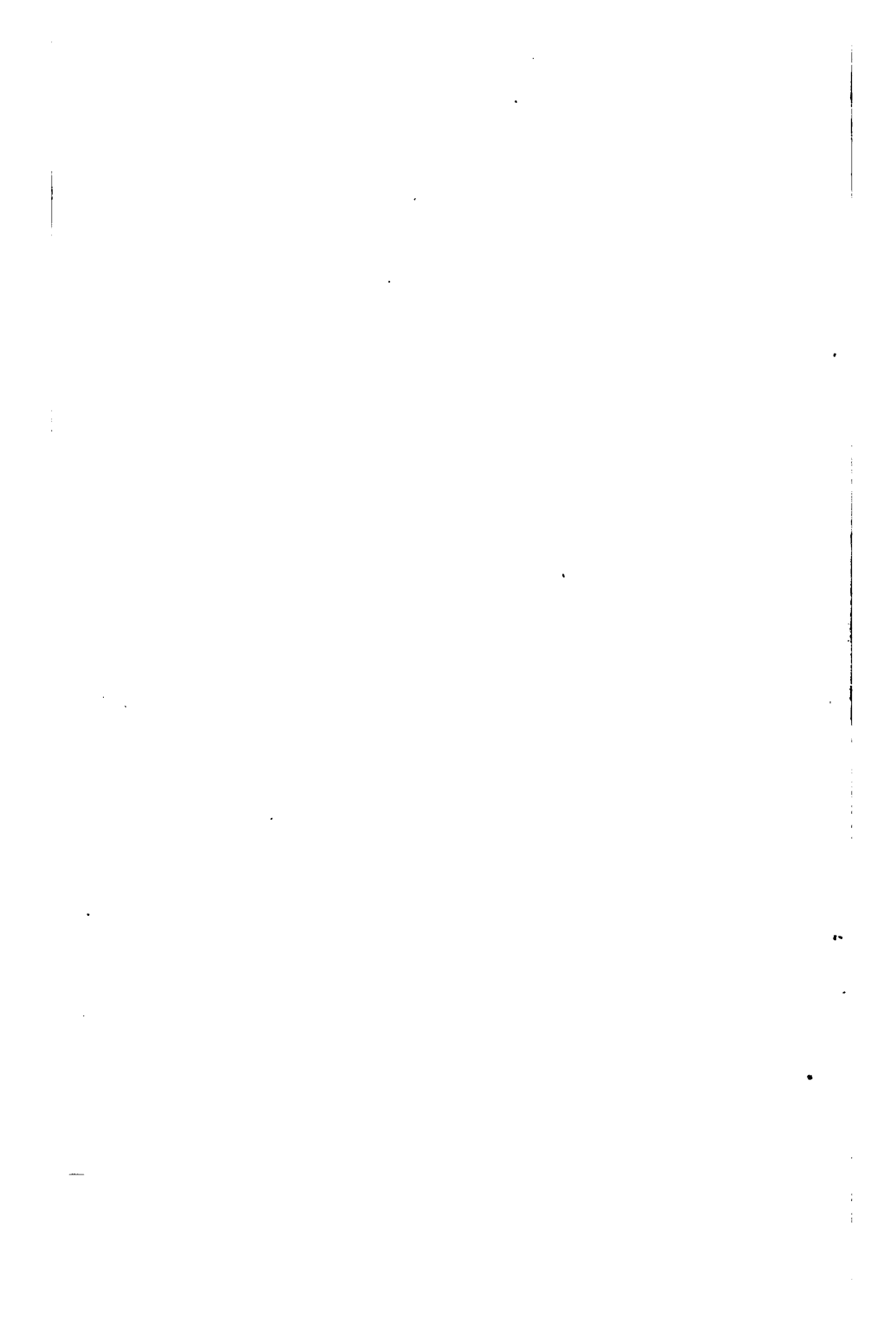
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2021



AN EPIC OF HEAVEN AND OTHER POEMS

BY
EDWARD S. CREAMER
Author "Adirondack Readings"



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An Epic of Heaven

I.

THE future life idea is innate,
Roseate with gleams of vistas wonderful;
Bestowed like sense of touch or that of sight,
And in the numerous chambers of the brain
Is about tangible as anything,—
Life has no ending to the teeming soul.
To bury Hope we meet with poor success.
Human nature is not abandoned here.

The valleys and the mountains of our dreams,
Though many and though varied in their moods,
Are not Imagination's progeny.
The only limit to the spirit's sight
Is that its case of flesh doth compass it.
Our dreams are faintly markings of the truth;
There is no image but may not be real.
Life and its possibilities we guess,
And, gazing at our fullest, there is still
Hills upon hills, far, far, beyond our ken.

An Epic of Heaven

II.

The principle of Motherhood cheers the heart.
Caressing her first born the matron young—
The two so innocent, so lacking art—
Become a picture of true loveliness;
One of the purest sights bestowed on earth,
Nor may the angels have a better one.
In humble life, as in wealth's rosy ways,
The glory is the same, of equal rank;
Nor strange that they're revered by a great
church,
Or that home's centered in their atmosphere.

III.

When in his growth man happiness attained,
In lines of life which gave him fullest joy,
Having the blood of fellowship in his veins
He fervently would lengthen out its years;
Picture it with his loftiest gifts of soul;
Therefore he built in earnest faith a state
Supremely blest, to hold perpetual.
A land where were united atoms pure;
A land where were united kith and kin;
A place of rescue from the grave and death.
Within were angels glorified and rare
With the Creator and the shining hosts.
Within were souls once habitants of earth;
The chief wish of each nation fruitage found.
Within were instruments and voices thrilled
With all the harmonies mind may enjoy.

An Epic of Heaven

All of the paraphernalia of our hopes
Were harvested together in this land
Of immense area-room enough for all,
Deserving and desirous of its worth,
Placed in the spaces, to be known as Heaven.

IV.

The coming to us of Jesus, the Christ,
Whose character is illimitable;
The promise of the prophets and the seers;
The best thought of the peoples of all lands;
Is a grand volume of the sacred books,—
A monument of celestial charity.
The Son partaking of the Father's gifts;
A path of safety and felicity.

Though our opinions of Him may vary,
May change through obsessions of care and
doubt;
Of circumstances, of environments,
That may shift like the colors in the sky,
He is unchangeable as the trend of things;
The Star of morning, heralding the good.
The sublimest development by far
That may be known within this planet's life.
The wing of Faith, the Light of all the world;
The sanctum sanctorum of the Temple;
Our divine Brother, more divine by far
Than our mentality may conceive of,—
We only partly know Him at our best.
A demonstration, tenderly, to win,

An Epic of Heaven

To instruct, look up to and imitate—
Though at our failings angels may well sigh—
And draw us with the magnet of His love.

V.

The use and not abuse of faculties
The body and the mind in exercise,
The heritage of our humanity,
Given to us in the Divine essay
Under potential opportunities—
Diversified with all the airs that blow—
Is the natural acme of existence:
The Hope of hope, the House not made by
hands,
Here or elsewhere—eternal in the Heavens!



POETRY AND THE POET.

AS the spirit never can
Be utterly bestowed on man,
Nor can his most persistent view
Take in its every shifting hue,
For its majesty might mock
And its loveliness might shock,
So its forms and apparitions,
Lineaments and swift monitions
Of heavenly beauty give a hint
Or a half-toned mental print

An Epic of Heaven

Of the glory and the power
Of our life's most perfect flower.

Thus the poet's fair ideal
He will never all reveal;
In the essence, in the soul,
He can apprehend the whole;
And in some inspired hour
He may revel in its power;
But his conscious modesty
Will not let the worldly see.
So he dresses his ideal
Out in clothing bright and real;
Plans the garments she shall wear,
Shows the color of her hair;
Picks the jewel or the flower
He would give her as a dower.
While the truth complete he can
Never yield to mind of man.
Yet the earth receives some gleams
Of divine light from his dreams.



LEGEND OF THE SABBATH.

TO Michael the Archangel came the mandate,
well
To guide St. Paul through Heaven and then
through Hell;
They visited the Heavens and saw therein

An Epic of Heaven

Felicity and beauty with no stain of sin ;
Each spirit there symmetrical and wise ;
Pure heavenly joyousness to all ears and eyes ;
St. Paul was happy, and aloud he cried :
"For this He lived, was crucified and died,
And the result is ample for the deed
Of Him by Whom from Death mankind was
freed."

The Archangel Michael with the great St. Paul
Went down into the Hells, and saw them all.
But the Apostle, at the fearful mark
Evil had made, and with it all the dark
Distress of soul, and bodily agony,
Was shocked with sympathy, as he well might
be,
And to his escort earnestly he cried :
"Have they no respite here?" to which replied
The Archangel: "No Sabbath know they here,
But evermore these scenes of woe and fear."

Then to the Master, prayerfully Paul said ;
"Lord, I have seen the wicked, doubly dead,
My heart, dear Lord, is burdened by their fate.
Though their transgressions from Thy laws are
great,
Grant Thou a day of rest to these forlorn
In memory of Thy resurrection morn!"
And ever since, the wise are wont to say,
The wicked rest in Hell each Sabbath Day.

An Epic of Heaven

INTIMATIONS OF THE FUTURE.

WHILE the soul is idly musing,
On thoughts not of its own
choosing,
Oft there come clear intimations,
Intuitions, inspirations,
Telling of a future life,
Far beyond this mortal strife;
And to-night, as we are going
With the current gently flowing,
Come lovely sentiments of peace,
And the mind asks no release
From the blessing of their charm,
Holding us from every harm.

We drift along the sacred walls,
Where the ivy's verdure falls,
And we think upon the graves
Whose grassy brink the river laves,
While the night is all around,
And the stillness is profound,
Save the moving, active part
Of each palpitating heart,
As we float upon the stream,
In a sort of mystic dream.

But see, as we approach our home,
How the great cathedral dome,
With its lofty golden spire,
Wears a crown of seeming fire

An Epic of Heaven

In the fluctuating light
Gleaming from the north at night,
With its colors green and red,
Where the electric shafts are spread!

And hark! across the quiet waves,
From the dim cathedral naves,
Come sweet voices, singing lays,
Quaint and sweet, of other days,
When the Saviour and the saint
Were on earth without a taint;
How the wonders that they wrought
Were beyond all human thought;
How their benisons abide,
And how He was crucified.

Now they move in happy staves—
Those soft voices—o'er the waves!
Coming down from Jacob's stair,
Where glide the blessed angels fair,
Or God's children rest at night,
Ere they mount into His sight.

How calm, how sweet this singing!
Surely from celestial lands,
Over boundles golden sands,
Are the echoes winging!
They fall with soothing on the soul
That has long with pains contended,
Presaging rest, as when the goal
Is reached and travail ended;
Where hope and faith do close in sight,
Beyond our thought, of pure delight.

An Epic of Heaven

May we see and hear this way
When shall come our closing day;
When shall come the twilight hour;
When grows weak our vital power;
When we're nearly done with life—
With its sorrow and its strife;
When our hearts are waxing old,
And even fears and hopes are cold,
In our darkness and distress,
Longing for God's tenderness.
In that hour, oh, let there come
A great brilliant light from Home,
With rich love and blessings rife,
Ushering in the better life;
Voices singing, may we hear,
Hopeful pæans, calm and clear,
From the mansions we shall see,
Welcoming both you and me.



THE DEACON'S DAUGHTERS.

THE deacon had three daughters, lithe and
fair,
Girls with three-story heads, handsomely domed.
Lovable, beautiful, spiritual, that could
Bring down in joy the best of heaven to earth,
And raise the hearts of earth in thanks to
heaven.

An Epic of Heaven

Humanity reached a higher plane in them,
Yet had no cause to blush at its success.
Certes they had to eat, to drink, to sleep,
To sew, to scrub, maybe sometimes to delve
In the old-fashioned garden full of flowers;
Yet never seemed they wanting much in that
All indescribable that is from heaven,
No less than earth, that subtile comeliness
Belonging only to the high belongings
Above the cadences of this great world.

What shall we say about them, praise or blame?
Blame them for glorifying this our earth?
Praise them for blooming like three lovely flow-
ers?

Let us give thanks that such as they exist;
Let us give thanks that we, too, are alive
To comprehend, admire, and freely bless.



A VOYAGE WITH DARWIN.

FROM the teeming, slimy masses
Floating in the ancient seas,
Till evolved through numerous classes,
Craft for mightier destinies,
Many a robust race had vanished
In the slaughter to subsist—
Many an appetite had been banished
In the struggle to exist.

An Epic of Heaven

Until a time when were evolved
Two craft, alike as brothers,
Earth's highest type in them seemed solved—
More complex than all others
Ere this, that did the earth control,
Within the eons rounded.
All others seeming lacked a soul,
Though myriadly they abounded.

When off these two craft proudly sailed,
First parallel courses took they;
But ere a score of centuries hailed
For different prizes look they—
Till different aim, with consequence,
Wrought changes, now prevailing,
That not surprising men of sense
Doubt they looked alike when sailing.

One with some permanence of course
Lost its sails in winds that blow;
And, lacking either mind or force,
Beached in woods was, long ago.
The other had a soul aboard,
With activities to court
New oceans, e'en when storms outpoured—
Do we know as yet its port?

An Epic of Heaven

SONG OF THE UPLANDS.

- O** BETTER a glimpse of a star
That may never be reached but be hoped
for ;
- O better a grand life afar,
That at least in the mind can be groped for,
Than to have all the senses desire,
And all that the passions require,
But no more, but no more.
- O better a faith that can cope
With the doubts of the world and can
quicken ;
- O better a life that has hope
To illumine it, though poverty stricken,
Than to have all that riches can hire
Or buy, so to feast and not tire,
But no more, but no more.
- O better a love that is blind,
That can see in the loved one no badness ;
- O better a trust in one's kind,
Spite of all of its folly and madness,
Than to stand all alone mid earth's mire,
Having food and raiment and fire,
But no more, but no more.

An Epic of Heaven

OUTSIDE THE NARROWS.

I GAZE towards the far-off sea,
Nearly unknown it is to me;
Ships ride at anchor in its tide
Or swiftly o'er its waters glide;
Some are so far they lose all form,
Or look like snowflakes in a storm;
While others rise so clear and near,
They almost seem already here
In port secure from furious gales,
With sunshine on their folded sails.

Oh ships, upon the further sea,
Have you no news to give to me?
Have you not seen from your lookout—
Have you not hailed with welcome shout—
Them that I knew in other days,
That went beyond my mortal gaze?
Oh, are they safely sailing now,
With steadfast course and sturdy prow?
Or meet they storms by night and day
Mid rock-bound straits, far, far away?

Some, it is true, seem near to me,
Almost as on this earthly sea;
Bright forms serene in pure array,
That could not wholly pass away;
While some, like shadows, float through haze
More dimly than in other days.

An Epic of Heaven

God shield all those, whoe'er they be,
That move upon that further sea ;
And keep them from the evil blast,
And bring them unto peace at last !



TWO WEEKS IN THE WOODS.

TWO weeks in the woods, with nature's
smile
About to gladden us all the while.
Away from papers we have to read,
Away from railways we use in our need ;
Away from the business that keeps us yet
To grindstone of routine we would forget.
Away from the work which is not all fun,
Away from trials from which we would run ;
From books we must read, from lines we must
write,
From chairs we must use, from wrongs we
would right,
To the grand old woods a while we would steal,
Remembering little, and let the wounds heal.

Two weeks in the woods where to get the leaven
That may raise our thinking somewhat toward
heaven.

Away from people we usually meet,
The haste and the bustle of teeming street.
The birds sing but simple songs, it is true,

An Epic of Heaven

Through the branches, o'er head, the sky's but
blue,
But the lazy hours give nature a chance
To get in her work just while the leaves dance.
How wholesome and cheerful the life goes on
Near the birch, the cedar and oak so strong;
While distant we hear the innocent play
Of the Riley children over the way.



THE BOSTON FAMINE, ANNO DOMINI

17—.

IT is not known unto this day
Why Boston fasted; but a ray
Of knowledge comes to us betimes
In an old chronicle of rhymes.
There it is stated that "a field
Crop failed." The annual yield,
The lack of which filled Boston air
With the sad music of despair,
The legend fails to specify,
And so to guess it we must try.

Of corn and wheat there was a store,
And cod and halibut were off shore;
Of deer and bear meat could be found
A plenty on the Common ground.
Potatoes, peas, and cabbage grew
Abundantly, and parsnips, too.

An Epic of Heaven

Alas, that on that hungry town
Gaunt famine should come stalking down!
The young and old in health declined.
It seemed that cruel Fate designed
To have this wholesome people die!
'Tis hard, to-day, to tell just why.
The merchants sent to far and near
For succor, and it would appear
That succor came, but wild storms tossed
The ship ashore, and it was lost.
A second vessel failed to reach
The harbor; sunk off Salisbury beach.

The famine spread at a frightful pace;
It looked as if the robust race
Of Boston town would fade away,
And that her streets would grow green hay.
Things got unto such fearful passes
The women took to wearing glasses;
As if by merely shielding sight
They might control the appetite.
Much that in Boston now we see
Is doubtless pure heredity.

The children in the district school
Escaped unwhipped, for the ferrule,
Within the master's weakened hand,
Was harmless as a fairy wand.
The deacons of the church could not
Collect the pence, and tithes forgot.
(Don't contradict! I know what I
Am writing; history won't lie.)

An Epic of Heaven

'Twas hard to tell how it would end
Did not the winds and tides befriend.
A loaded sloop, with beans and pork,
Got safely in from far New York.
The bells were rung all up and down,
And famine ended in that town.



ABOVE CAUSALITY.

WHERE ride the inner guides to-night?
A snowflake fell upon my hand,
Soft as a spirit's touch, and white,
Brought back from the interior land
Unto a mother's sight.

I heard some strains of music when
The moon sank o'er the wood,
And if they never come again
Their meaning well I understood:
The singers once were men.

Wouldst follow up the stair of beams—
Good stars have dropped it for our kind—
To mount above the land of dreams,
Where reason permeates the mind,
Where all exists and nothing seems?

Ah! pity for the soul of him
Who never hears the saintly song,

An Epic of Heaven

Nor sees the beings on the rim
Of the great zone, where all belong
When life has reached the cherubim.



ON THE BRONX.

HOW gayly, on this day of June,
The Bronx flows, bowered in green,
With trees and vines and birds in tune—
A fresh and varied scene!
And in a shady nook there shakes
A boat in trim attire;
Three maidens are within; it makes
A picture to admire.

How charming are they all! lithe forms,
Arrayed in dainty dresses;
Tranquil of mind, no selfish storms
Could dwell beneath those tresses;
And they are gathering sprays of flowers
From drooping branches, laden
With perfumed blooms, to cheer the hours,
For youth is with each maiden.

One with an oar (so archly faced)
The boat to bank keeps press'd in;
Another, with fine features graced,
On damask cushion's resting,

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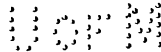
Receiving boughs from one who'd wake
Dead hearts to life—a vision
That could delight the poet Drake,
Who thought this stream Elysian.

O Bronx! meandering toward the sea,
Through shadow and through lightness,
Never before thou'st seemed to me
So full of life and brightness
As at this time, 'mid birds and boat,
With maidens gathering flowers;
Like elves of fairyland afloat,
They bless the passing hours.



TAPESTRIES.

HERE in the room where oft I sit,
And where I weave my webs, or knit
The thoughts that come into the mind,
When the imagination's kind,
At times I'm startled at the way
Surroundings with one's thoughts have play.
Even the tapestry on the wall,
That days we hardly note at all,
Shows to one's moods a difference—
A something almost kin to sense—
Reflecting, like a looking-glass,
Much that within the mind may pass.



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When the world seems to be my friend,
And nothing happens to offend,
The tapestry looks of pattern prim,
As if 'twould never show a whim;
Of placid outline, debonair,
To breed contentment anywhere.
But let, instead, things go awry,
Which ever to avoid I try,
Fiends from therein look out at me,
And hold unnatural jollity,
Enlarging parts that hardly hint
Of form and face, and fleshy tint,
Into queer shapes that broadly grin,
And add unto what's ill within.



PROMETHEUS BOUND.

STEALING the fire from off Jove's
throne,
To help his kin, he here is shown,
Bound in the chains he cheerily
Endures, deprived of liberty.

They whom he stole it for ne'er come
To visit him in martyrdom,
Where, with vulture—mental stress—
He ponders on man's happiness.

He pity hath; he knows his kind
May not forever be so blind;

An Epic of Heaven

And, should his story fade away,
His fire will burn and live for aye.

The spark thou hast, O poet. Wait;
Appreciation may come late:
And heedless though the world pass by,
No living thought will ever die.

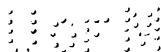
Alike in crowds or solitude,
Be evermore thy strength renewed;
Bear with the cheer mind will afford
The light which is its own reward.



THE LEGEND OF LOVE.

THE present age has legends, too,
And rich as long ago,
With skies as full of light and blue,
And human hearts aglow
With love, as when Boccaccio wrote
Those quaint immortal scenes,
Where through his changing fancies float
A bevy of fair queens.

I see the walls of memory's dome
With pictures covered o'er;
I see thereon a mass of foam,
A wreck, and rock-bound shore.



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The past, once fair, now dim and pale,
Looks shuddering in my face;
The glorious goals, once in my hail,
Now fly from my embrace.

I see the duties that I gave
Unto the winds, flash by;
I see them mount on pleasure's wave,
And move a-lee and die.
The burdens that I cast away
Come back with greater weight;
I watch, but see no morning gray
Dawn o'er the hills of fate.

But comfort greets me even there,
And one on whom I gaze
Is lovely as the sylphs of air
That tread the twilight haze;
It is my gracious first, first love,
Her whom I loved in youth,
When on the tree of life above
Still bloomed the flowers of truth.

What rapture laughed about my heart
When first I saw that girl;
With what a thrilling, throbbing start,
My brain was in a whirl!
The life of those sweet moments pen
Could ne'er express in rhyme;
The thoughts of love, that ruled me then,
No fairy bells could chime!

An Epic of Heaven

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

WHEN the silvery orb of the night is near
full,
You may see on its face, late or soon,
That effigy vague known to children and scalds
As the Man in the Moon.

This man in the moon sits aloft in a tree,
And one of his functions up there
Is to wait on the mythical Queen of the Night,
A woman that's fair.

This woman's a goddess with many a name,
But Cynthia's the one I admire;
She reigns through the hours after the sun
Has put out his fire.

The man in the moon watches sharp to be sure
When the shepherd, her lover's, asleep,
Endymion by name, who pastures his flock
Where Latmos is steep.

Fair Cynthia gently comes down when he sleeps
To kiss him most lovingly there;
'And who wouldn't wish such a shepherd to be,
To be kissed by the fair?

Yet they who are wiser than old-time romance,
Dare tell us the man and the tree,

An Epic of Heaven

When viewed through the telescope vanish from
sight,
And are dead as can be.

But Science, avaunt! in the man and the tree,
And Cynthia, loving and bright,
We firmly believe, though not ours is her kiss
In the moonshine to-night!



THE FIRST BUTTERFLY.

BRIGHT flutterer, with golden name,
Freckled from gentle dun to flame.
How hast thou dared to venture out
Ere the buds begin to sprout?

When underneath the sheltering bower,
Arbutus hath not shown her flower,
Creeping from the modest moss,
With her brilliant leaves of gloss:

When as yet within the brook,
Leaves lie pressed as in a book,
Held within the Ice King's arms
Clasped about their frozen charms;

Why wert thou not wise to wait
Till King Frost should abdicate?
Till the bluebirds pipe in tune,

An Epic of Heaven

Till the May looks on toward June,
Till the dandelion's yellow
Lends the lawn a radiance mellow?

These few hours of sunshine warm
May prelude a fatal storm,
Bringing frost or bringing snow;
Where, then, frail one, wilt thou go?
Robin's forty times as strong,
Yet we do not hear his song.



THE WOMAN IN CAMP—1854.

THE sight of a woman was rare in those
days;
So Deep Canon Camp was set in a blaze
When the rumor was started, and sent by each
door—
A woman had got there the evening before.

The excitement spread wide, away on the breeze
Rose racket and cheers, to where the red trees
Shadowed the gulches, for the thoughts of each
man
Were intent on the woman, not on pick, nor on
pan.

Ah, never a miner within all the camp
But out toward the cabin which held her would
tramp;

An Epic of Heaven

Eager the gathering, they envied, ah yes,
The fellow who caught but a glimpse of her
dress.

The husband, nonchalant, came to the crowd,
And as he appeared Jim Blonde spoke aloud:
"Fetch her out here, Lord bless her, she's a
surprise;
We hunger to see her; it's good for weak eyes."

"My wife she is sick, and I, too, feel bad,
Been robbed by the Indians, lost all that we
had."
But Jim Blonde, the speaker, said in reply,
"Bring out the woman, we won't let her die."

She came to the front, her face in a smile
That went to the heart of each miner mean-
while;
And welcomes were given, some rough, and all
strong,
Mid waving of hats, and cheers loud and long.

Three thousand, in gold, was raised there and
then
Given, with pleasure, by rough-bearded men;
Well, the sun will melt ice, and woman can
make
The heart of a Midas to melt for her sake.

An Epic of Heaven

SOMETIME, SOMEWHERE.

NE'ER tell us that all the endeavor
We make shall bring fruitage never;
That there's no such place as heaven,
That sinners cannot be forgiven,
That sin, like the wound on the finger,
May heal, but the scar will yet linger,
Nor vanish through years or tears.

The answer speaks never to doubt us,
Endeavor reaps harvests about us;
While happiness comes to the masses,
And fire may restore wilted grasses.
When wrong to the stubble-field's righted,
It blooms as it ne'er had been blighted,
A meadow of fragrance for years.



AN INCIDENT IN THE SERVIAN ARMY.

HOW the General's heart-blood leaped and
run
As a letter from home brought the news
That his wife was well and his new-born son;
All his home in his mind he reviews,
And a gleam of a tear comes to his eyes,
A gleam more of pleasure than pain;
His wife and his babes are as Paradise;
He'd deem himself there if home again.

An Epic of Heaven

A soldier now, a prisoner bound,
Before him sullenly is brought;
Minus two fingers has been found:
Done that he'd be discharged, 'twas thought.
Denied, however, that the deed
Was by himself or a coward's brand;
A comrade helped him in his need;
But he'd not name him by command.

"Art not ashamed," the General asked,
"Thus dastardly to hurt thy hand,
Our army in its work sore tasked,
The Turks upon our Fatherland?"
"Dear General, pardon," he replied,
"I've fought the Turks, ne'er shirked before,
And bravely charged where thousands died,
But I'd see wife and babes once more."

"Indeed," scornfully returned the chief,
"Thy leave of absence I'll make long;
So say thy prayers, and make them brief,
Prepare to die for this great wrong."
A soldier guard was here drawn out
Before the prisoner, under ban,
Who crossed himself, stood grave and stout,
For not a coward was this man.

Forgetting something he went o'er
And placed within the General's hand
Some money pieces, three or four;
He said, "My all—I own no land,

An Epic of Heaven

Let them be given to my wife
When of my wretched death she hears."
"Go," said the General, "take thy life
To her," his eyes brimmed round with tears.



THE ROBIN'S ANTHEM.

IN the lowest limb of a tall oak tree
Two robins have builded their simple nest.
Some straw and some mud, and some twigs we
see—

In it is the hurry of life expressed?

It doth answer its purpose, as a brood
Of hungry youngsters are living there.
Their bills are wide open, eager for food,
That lazy progenitors might despair.

In the later summer you'll hear their song.
Their mellow anthem, melodious and choice—
When their young, now matured, the sounds
prolong—

All the orchard's alive as they rejoice.

When the sun hath rested over the hill
A concert they give; each tries to excel
The other, and with tongue, throat, breast and
bill,
Sing "Glory! glory!" and they do it well.

An Epic of Heaven

AFTER THE BATTLE.

THE sun has vanished in the west,
Leaving scorched plains and heights at
rest,
While cooling breezes earth invest.

The twilight fades above the hill,
Where we to-day have fought our fill,
And where the enemy is still.

Fair Cynthia begins to throw,
From the soft crescent of her bow,
Her showers of silvery shafts below,

While hills and valleys, meadows, streams,
Lie beautiful beneath her beams,
Like pictures in a painter's dreams.

And hark! there comes upon the ear
The whippoorwill's low note, so near,
So sadly sweet and coldly drear.

It throws a gloom upon the heart
More than could any song of art,
Giving the soul an inward start.

Ah, sad bird! mournest thou what is fled—
Something to which thy heart was wed?
Or is it for the battle's dead?

An Epic of Heaven

If for these dead, oh, sing away
Till morning comes, with streaks of gray
Upon his chariot's ruddy ray,

For they with heroes now belong,
And slain for right or slain for wrong,
Are worthy of the sweetest song.

Ah! must thy music cease so soon?
Faint and more faint thy low notes swoon,
Slow dying with the dying moon.

Perhaps upon life's checkered shore,
Where thought at least can upward soar,
Thy mournful voice we hear no more.

And yet methinks I hear thee still,
Lingering about yon distant hill—
'Tis fancy, not the whippoorwill!



CARDINAL MANNING'S PALTRY PURSE.

THIS august personage of ripened age,
Through whose good hands vast fortunes
passed for years,
Had fed the poor so bountifully well,
Had wiped the tears from off so many eyes,
That can we marvel at him, almost bare,

An Epic of Heaven

Or surprised or shocked at the trifle left
(A washwoman had a heavier purse)—
"A sixpence, shilling, sovereign and a half."

Ideals of the Master ruled his life,
And all his building was for Paradise,
While others hoarded gold and sought estate,
The plaudits of the world—the cheer, the fame.
More selfish he, yet higher, who saw earth
A footstool in the primary school of spheres—
A harbinger of joys ineffable—
An atom in the palace where God dwells.

He knew it! 'Mid the eyeless he had sight,
And where most others saw but barren wolds—
Fit sepulchres for dead to mold and rot—
He saw earth's flowers transfigured to the skies;
He saw the wheat growths of Eternity.



ROAMING THROUGH WOODS.

ROAMING through woods in serious
mood,
Hearing far waterfalls play,
I found, almost in solitude,
A crystal spring, one day.

Unseen ere this it might have been,
And yet it clearly gleamed,

An Epic of Heaven

Meandering off in discipline,
While sun rifts o'er it beamed.

And so a thought in some careless breast,
Secret almost and sure,
Is found when God's rays on it rest,
A crystal rivulet pure.



THE TWO BLOSSOMS.

TWO blossoms grew upon one tree,
And both of them were dear to me.

I watched them through their budding time,
And through their beauteous early prime.

A torrid tempest came one day,
And deadly ruin marked its way.

Alas! it struck the weaker one,
And soon its bloom and life were gone.

Under the burning breath it fell,
'Mid tears of those who loved it well.

The other still stands brave and strong,
At morn, at noon, at vesper song.

An Epic of Heaven

To it the fatal fever bane
Was only nutriment and gain.

It grows so hale, so sweet, so fair,
Amid God's all-embracing air,

Its life at each and every stage
Adding more beauty to the age.

Oh, soul of man! go search and see
If thou canst question Diety.

I bring two blossoms to that shrine,
Two of the dearest ones of mine.

O Father Mind! can we not clasp
Thy answer in our mental grasp?

When both have done with this blue dome
And entered to Thy higher home,

Shalt Thou not love the weaker flower
As much as that which lived its hour?

Shalt Thou not make the weak one gro
And gain all that is missed below;

While through the epochs of all time
We hail Thy equal love sublime?

An Epic of Heaven

AT THE GATE.

ALONE, and by the garden gate she stands,
Watching the tender twilight as it lends
To our good earth a dreamy atmosphere,
That in these calmly sweet September days
Enters the soul like echoes of old hymns,
Which we have heard in twilights of the past,
Giving contentment with this world of ours.

Her forehead fair is fanned by gentle gales;
Her yellow hair is waving in their waves;
And her fair person, in the mellow air,
Looks like a denizen of Paradise
Just dropped to earth to see it go asleep,
With all its millions, in the arms of Night.

She has no lover yet, but in her mind
There has grown up a vague, uncertain dream
Of what perchance her other part may be;
And, like a lonely bird in early spring,
Her gentle breast is fluttering for its mate.

So in her musing, at this twilight hour,
While star by star comes out into the night,
And planets seem not a day's journey off,
She's wishing that the world may grant to her
Some one to fill the niche within her heart,
That has been vacant, but not known before—
Some sweet and ardent nature that will love
Her for herself through all the coming years.

An Epic of Heaven

THE THREE KINGS.

THERE dwelleth three Kings in this world,
and their thrones
Are held well in place by their people's desire,
Who need them, and of them do seldom e'en
tire,
But unto their honor peal bell and burn fire,
And unto their glory pile monument stones.

One King lives ensconced on the valley's best
site,
His fields without labor with great riches
teem,
And pleasure within his frail court reigns su-
preme.
His subjects think life but a sensuous dream,
And few of them know of the wrong and the
right.

Another King lives by the hill top, and he
Has mansions superb, that his subjects have
built;
Much blood have they bravely in giant wars
spilt.
They learning encourage, and have sense of
guilt—
Make earth gayly blossom, take life from the
sea.

The King of the Mountain lives close to its top,
His subjects in temples find rapture and rest;

An Epic of Heaven

And often they reason on ways which are best
To win from the Hill King a now and then
guest;
But stony's their soil, and it yields a poor crop.

The King of the Valley has subjects who tire
Of surroundings that cease to please them,
and far
They wander till reaching the Hill, where
they are
Brought into the palace upon the King's car—
For part of their journey is through woods of
fire.

The life in the Valley's replenished from earth;
The King of his vineyards thinks well of and
boasts,
And his women and wines he merrily toasts.
The King of the Hill, from the valley out-
posts,
Gets men who've grown tired of the land of
their birth.

Some subjects the King of the Hill, too, has lost,
Who weary of living 'mid war, feast and gold,
Have wandered far up where the Mountain
stands cold
In purity (never to be bought or sold),
Though their feet sorely bled as rough fields
were crossed.

An Epic of Heaven

The King of the Mountain has subjects who go
From his temples so vast, where steps to the
sky
Are winding away to the bright belts on high;
And there reigneth a Prince whose people
ne'er die,
Though all served a time 'neath the three Kings
below.



THE VETERAN TO HIS CANTEEN.

I BRING you out, my old canteen,
Many long years have passed between
The time I saw you last, old friend.
I love to think that at my end
You may be present, generous one,
That gave until your all was gone,
And filled again your good quart pouch
For march, for battle, for the couch.
Of all the friends I've known or seen,
None was your better, old canteen.

Dost recollect, when we held the bridge,
When Hayniman crept o'er the ridge,
Crushed by a sword blow in the head?
How kind you were, for when he said
That he was thirsty, all you had
You gave in welcome, and were glad

An Epic of Heaven

That you could ease his thirst. We sighed
At his misfortune. Well, he died.
Much of the war's grief have we seen,
You and myself, my old canteen.

I well know when I saw you first;
I had not then been much athirst;
You were respectable looking then.
I know I was much younger when
I grasped you in my hand, and slung
You o'er my shoulder; we were young.
Moth eaten now's your dusty coat,
And partly rusty is your throat;
But no new one shall come between
Our old-time love, my good canteen.

You know the men who kissed your lips,
Some died in battle; some in ships
Have ventured far from port; and some
Still wear the uniform, hear the drum.
Some turned from the good drink you gave—
One fills I know a drunkard's grave.
Some in the fight for daily bread
Are quite successful; some are dead.
Few better men were ever seen
Than shared your love, my old canteen.

An Epic of Heaven

The flight from the classic and prim to the
freshness and grasses of nature;
The might of the ocean, the factories exalting
and vengeful,
The great spirit of cities, and the audacity even
of prairies!



THE POE COTTAGE, FORDHAM, N. Y.

SO here is where the poet once did dwell?
And we admire the house because he slept,
Lived, loved and suffered in it; where so well
For years he ably worked; ah, here he kept
This poor unfortunate at his work up hill;
Impracticable, with the poet soul
Supreme and earnest, gathering to his will
The magic images he would control.

This humble cottage him a shelter gave;
Roses of Sharon like these met his glance;
Sprays of these trees he saw in moonlight wave;
This lawn and shrubbery aided him in romance.
Here did this alchemist of beauty live,
And turn earth's usual clays unto pure gold;
And unto rhymes such brilliancy did give,
They're so immortal, they shall ne'er seem
old.

An Epic of Heaven

Where Whittier lived, in honor now is held;
The home of Longfellow is sanctified.
Each maker of true poetry's a weld
Uniting men in brotherhood far and wide.
So, cottage, feel thou not unconscious proud;
Genius has lived and struggled 'neath thy
roof;
Though thou'rt not yet a magnet to the crowd,
That thou wilt be some time it needs no proof.

Could Edgar Poe once more return to earth,
Surprised would he be at his glowing fame;
Few giant minds, foreign or native birth,
Have in fame's temples now a mightier name.
Long may his cottage home be kept intact
Wherein his labors did the world enrich;
Discoverer of a weirdness to attract,
Apostle of a beauty to bewitch.



THE UNITY OF MAN.

MAN cannot raise alone,
More than can float a stone;
The environments of life
Bring him peace or bring him strife.
Though he strive with great desire,
In his burning heart of fire,
With his mind in wild delight,
In the selfishness of might,

An Epic of Heaven

To arise above his kin,
And to shun them in their sin,
With diseases of the town
That he would forever frown—
Ah! the wavelets of the air
Will convey them even there,
Where his palace lifts its head,
Where he rests on downy bed—
Ah! the passions of his brain
May there make his labor vain;
Or the outside world of thieves
May conceal beneath his eaves,
And when night is o'er the earth
May disturb him in his mirth;
And his talent and his gold
May not save him in his fold,
Nor secure his lifelong lease,
Nor impart to him much peace;
For he'll find the low must rise
To the height of his own skies
Ere his heaven is secure—
Ere he ceases to endure;
For throughout all nature's plan
Is the Unity of Man!



AFTER THE MASQUERADE.

A YOUTH in London at a masquerade
All dressed up as a prince, his part
well played,

An Epic of Heaven

Greatly enjoyed the dance
With a princess of France,
A witch from the bizarre times
Of castles and romance rhymes.

So overjoyed was he
At the rainbowed royalty
Which his dress bestowed
In its shimmering load,
His mind went astray,
In some wayward way,
And he really believed
 He was Wales himself,
 With the power and pelf;
He was so deceived.

Next morn, ere the hour of nine by the clock,
At the palace door he tried to knock,
 Arrayed for the pageantry,
 And all feathered and free.
 Claiming entrance there
 As the rightful heir
 Born the crown to wear.

Poor head! turned strange through the power
And the charm of a gala hour;
Arrested, put past lock and key!
All for his tinselled pedigree.

Let us have pity for this son of earth!
Shall we say, alas, for his simple birth?
Ay, the birth of one is the birth of all!

An Epic of Heaven

The Saviour was born in an humble stall,
And what czar or prince or chief is he
Who can claim a nobler pedigree?



ON THE FRONT PLATFORM.

IT rained, and when I got aboard
That car, the lowering weather
Made every one feel dull and cross.
We were alone together,
The driver and myself; I passed
My nickel through the door; his throat
Was in a muffler, and he looked
Betwixt a southwold and a shote.

He smiled good-naturedly, then took
From out his ample waterproof
An orange; 'twas a splendid sphere—
He held it from his mouth aloof—
“My teeth are watering all day long
To eat this juicy fruit,” he said;
“I got it on my early trip—
On such food are the favored fed.”

“Why not indulge and eat?” I said;
“This self-denial’s hardly right.”
“Nay,” said he; “you should see my boy;
He is, indeed, a comely sight.

An Epic of Heaven

Of two years old he lacks a month.

I've a swing off, an hour, at seven;
I eat my supper at my home,
And there I get a slice of heaven.

"When I get home, though somewhat tired,

I try to be myself a while,
'And when I toss this to my boy,
You'll see that merry youngster smile.

I'll think no more of the freezing weather,
The lagging hours, the little pay,
The comforts of the millionaires—

"You're getting off—well, friend, good day!"



GENIUS.

I ASKED three men I met one day,
What genius was?—their hairs were gray
And much experience made them sage,
And they were bright lights of the age.
One said it was a "food from Heaven,
That came to some with extra leaven."
Another said 'twas "work, and will
To do and dare, and life fulfill."
The last one shook his hoary head—
"Genius is death"—'twas all he said.

Well, here we have three thoughts forsooth;
So tell me man, or hopeful youth,

An Epic of Heaven

Which of these three hath spoke the truth?
Or, is each one like to a stream
That images each living scene—
Thro' which its moving in a dream—
Giving but to the voyager,
Be he poet or philosopher,
Whatever come before the eye—
Whate'er he sees in passing by.

Is genius then so very fine
Not to be measured by a line?
A something secret to mankind—
Outside the standard of the mind?
Beyond the compass, well-known rule—
Almost synonymous with fool—
Projecting thought, ideal, sublime
To live throughout the coming time;
From Homer, with the Trojan War,
That lives tho' kings have gone;
To Clarke that put "Night's mantle on,
And pinn'd it with a star."



THE POET.

FEW can know well the mind of him who
sees
The unwritten Scripture in the works of God;
Whose sight can reach far out into void space
And see the secrets hidden in the stars,

An Epic of Heaven

And read the records of the human heart,
Beating the same beat through a million years.

He, the true poet, is a mystery
Unto himself as to the common crowd,
He lives his life not in the realm of sense,
But in the realm of soul; he gives his hours
Freely to work that will in time uplift
Out of the sloughs of doubt the growing man.

Unto the crowd he seems to dwell alone;
But who would deem him lonesome when he
hath
Bright forms around him, coming ever, going—
Heroes and sages, women divinely fair—
All those called by his brain forth from the
depths,
The saints and saviors, and the kings and
queens?

All houseless may he seem unto the crowd;
And yet within his mind a palace stands,
Filled with the richest furniture and gems,
And marbles pure from unknown fairy lands,
And carpets like fair lawns in May or June,
And ceilings with the frescoes of the skies.

The crowd may deem him lacking harp and
reed;
And yet the music of the universe
He hears, and voices filled with melody
From far-off planets come to cheer his soul,

An Epic of Heaven

And symphonies borne to him, on the wind,
From islands by whose shores the mermaids
sing.

Unto the crowd, he seldom travels far ;
And yet all nature comes before his eyes.
He sees the battle in the distant field ;
He sees the mighty storm, where ships go
down ;
He sees the dreary mountains of the moon ;
He sees the spread of knowledge through the
world.

He hath nor God nor heaven, unto the crowd,
And yet his thoughts flow upward straight to
Him,
The Mind that rules the system of the spheres,
That works eternally but for the best ;
And his soul holds communion with the lost
Who dwell somewhere beyond the mortal stars.



NOT UNKNOWN UNTO THEMSELVES.

WHERE'ER they be, rich or hewers of wood
Bound to a wheel for aspiring toward
good,
Thirsting for things that fade ever away,
Building up hopes to come down every day ;

An Epic of Heaven

Be they well or ill, let them laugh or groan,
The gods to themselves are never unknown.

If they're seated with Jove to eat and sup,
Or drink the lees from the tyrant's cup;
If they dream Elysium's peaceful dream,
Or are shut in dungeons without a gleam,
They still have pleasures, however alone;
The gods to themselves are never unknown.

The wind may whistle, the storm may come on,
And the sun, the moon, and the stars be gone;
The mind can survive, it has its own shore,
O'er which the ocean of death cannot roar.
Ye cannot deprive it of what's its own;
The gods to themselves are never unknown.



A PILLOW OF PINE.

I REST on a pillow of pine, brought home
from the summer mountains;
The balm of its needles is soothing, and grate-
ful I feel to the hands,
The tender and thoughtful hands of the friends
that gathering remembered me.
And yet the aroma it yields takes me further
than summer mountains,
Takes me down to the forests of pine in Vir-
ginia and North Carolina.

An Epic of Heaven

Again I ride a horse and sleep in the woods and
by roadways ;
Again I am with companions and implements of
warfare ;
I hear the drum and the fife, and the bugle's
call to action ;
The batteries belch their fire, and the squadrons
charge like demons,
And from rude-made breastworks come showers
of lead like hailstones,
While the flag goes up or down as success
crowns our endeavors.
The wounded lie in the forest, but a fire is eat-
ing its way there ;
While helpless they lie till consumed in the ter-
rible havoc.
And men are dying with thirst in the grime of
the conflict unending,
While the night stops only awhile the carnage
and belchings of cannon ;
And I lie on a pine needle bed, under the bright
stars of heaven.



THE WILD ROSE.

THE wild rose that by roadside grew
Made friends with dust and rain,
Companions of the breeze and dew
Of country field and lane.

An Epic of Heaven

Though grown in hungry earth and stone
Some nourishment it found,
And, modestly, it would atone
By cheering the dull ground.

As if to rival garden plant
Each tint it sought to cull,
And was well able to enchant
When it blossomed beautiful.



RECEIVED FROM A CHILD.

AS others were writing our little one
Said, "To papa she, too, would write;"
Making an effort, and when it was done
'Twas sent in an envelope white.

Ah! what pleasure it gave to receive it,
For its circles my heart entwined;
Though few words were therein to relieve it,
And its paper had not been lined.

'Twas a quaint and beautiful letter,
Brimmed full of young effort sincere;
Where's the father from youngster got better,
Or one to be treasured more dear?

For a talisman choice I will choose it,
And when shaken by passions wild

An Epic of Heaven

For my safety I'll gladly peruse it,
This letter received from a child.

She informs me the folks at home love me,
That she wishes that I were home;
That she prays to the angels above me
To watch over me while I roam.

Though but part of the alphabet's in it,
And to many it seems a scrawl—
They could never tell where to begin it—
Yet I can understand it all.



TO A BROTHER.

RELIGIONS of the world accommodate
Most every being who would walk him
straight.

If one's not suited where so much is shown
He has the power to make one of his own.

The Protestant, the Catholic, the Jew
Are brothers in their worship; it is true
The forms are different, but each sincere heart
Hath worshiped the Creator from the start.

The kindly, blessed Father of us all
Hath every child of earth within His call;

An Epic of Heaven

And while some go this, and some go that way,
He is the judge to say the one astray.

We worship and are sanctified thereby;
Get nearer to the Father while we try.
Though finite is our grasp, our staff a reed,
We get the manna from the heavens we need.

Bow your head here, or bow it over there,
The Father's love is present everywhere.
O, brother of my heart! bow where you will,
E'en though we differ, you're my brother still.



SWEET REST TO HIM!

SWEET rest to him, tender and bright,
Last mighty Captain of our fight!
His country owes him boundless praise
For faithful service all his days,
With sword and brain true to the right.

When treason rose in deadly might
This gallant, fearless modern knight,
In duty sought the battle's blaze!
Sweet rest to him!

In these last years, with hair grown white,
To see him was a pleasing sight.
Children were happy in his gaze;
Women and warriors sought his ways;

An Epic of Heaven

His gracious manners gave delight—
Sweet rest to him!



THANKSGIVING DAY.

AT the gateway of the winter now comes
Thanksgiving tide.
In the glory of its atmosphere, its pie and tur-
key pride,
And it is most becoming that its cheer should
far and wide abound,
E'en going to the humblest home where'er it
may be found.

In olden time Thanksgiving was for harvests
poor or good,
The corn, the pumpkin, wheat, and all that gave
a livelihood,
For poor returns the Pilgrims held up their
hearts in praise,
Far greater should our thanks be that live in
these glorious days.

Then welcome be Thanksgiving with its mani-
fold feasts and joys;
Under many a homestead roof now gather the
girls and boys;
And though some of us fail somewhat in har-
vests where we strive,

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We should be thankful for our hopes, and that
we are alive.

Then pass around the turkey, the mince and ap-
ple pies;
Don't slight the poor and needy if in wisdom
you'd be wise,
To relieve distress our people have only to be
told,
For Lord be thanked the human heart is yet as
good as gold!



SONG—HER IRISH BLUE EYES.

SWEET Maggie Magill, she lives on a hill,
Her father's farm is next to mine;
I met her oft when I drove to the mill,
Her hair was like gold in the bright sunshine.
Away from her now in a foreign land,
Where many a maiden one's constancy tries,
I long for a touch of her small, friendly hand,
I sigh for a glance of her Irish blue eyes.

Sweet Maggie Magill, when coming away
I ask her to promise my bride she will be;
She gives me her word; what more could she
say?
That when I come back she will marry me.

An Epic of Heaven

My heart to her keeping I fondly surrender,
She of all lasses the treasure and prize;
Ah! would she were here, so gracious and tender!
Oh for one glance of her Irish blue eyes!



APPLES FALL.

'TIS evening in the country,
In the mild September hours,
And we linger in the odors
Of the autumn fields and flowers.

The cricket and the katydid
Have brought their song and call,
And in the orchard gloaming
We may hear the apples fall.

Why do the apples fall this way?
Who knows the reason why?
Or why that meteor yonder
Leaves the arches of the sky?

But even the little sparrow's end
Is known to the Lord of all;
And we meditate with nature
As we hear the apples fall.

An Epic of Heaven

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE.

His remains were brought over from Tunis, at the expense of Mr. Corcoran, of Washington, D. C., and were reinterred, with appropriate services, at the beautiful Oak Hill Cemetery, June 9, 1883.

BACK to the land that gave him birth,
He's brought to rest forevermore,
To mingle with his mother earth,
Back from the far Tunisian shore.

Here we'll his sacred dust entomb,
Beneath his own loved flag unfurled;
But who could tomb his song? 'Twill bloom
Long as mankind live in the world!

What sailor, 'neath the stars or sun,
Wherever he may chance to roam,
Or soldier, when the battle's done,
But in his heart loves "Home, Sweet Home?"

The emigrants who leave the land
That gave them and their kindred life,
The thousands landing on our strand,
All love the song with home so rife.

Yet he who wrote it seldom could
Claim that he had a home. His song
To publishers brought fortunes good,
While he with poverty lived long.

An Epic of Heaven

Now he is back unto his own ;
A generous man advanced the means,
And after three decades have flown,
His dust is 'mid familiar scenes.

Ah! if his gentle spirit sees
From the immortal homes on high,
Retaining yet his faculties,
This does his soul much gratify.

Poor wanderer! back to home again,
To rest 'neath flowers and showers of June,
Thy simple song from simple men
And women shall not perish soon.



EASTER.

WHETHER as in old church romance
On Easter morn the sun would
dance,
Spiritual eye can see this day
The angel roll the stone away
From the tomb door, and so set free
The Christ foretold by prophecy,
And from the body's earthly prison
Proclaim the news that "He has risen!"

Yes, He hath risen! and may, too,
All who their selfishness subdue,
To rich and poor, to wild and tame,

An Epic of Heaven

Obscurely housed, or known to fame,
Alike He's brought—ah! blissful sight—
This immortality to light;
Thy neighbor love as self and God,
And little matters it how thou'rt shod.

Blessed Easter! for it all years long,
Be welcomed in with joy and song!
Rejoice! it preaches to the earth,
Beyond the tomb there is a birth
Of soul triumphant—life and breath,
That never can know aught of death!
Rejoice! Hosannas joyful rise
To Christ, the pathway to the skies!



WHEN GEORGE GETS MARRIED.

Wedding of George H. Rowe and Ida Belle
Wood of Brooklyn, N. Y.

WHEN George gets married how they will
sigh,
The numerous girls; they'll not tell why
Though they must know one only can
Be properly married to a man;
And love must always make a choice—
At least one heart can well rejoice.

November, with her bonny airs,
Is now about us; month for pairs

An Epic of Heaven

To act conjointly and not lurch,
But meet together at the church;
The wedding march, the service said,
The ring put on and they are wed.

When George is wed the lovely one
Will have a prince to lean upon;
And he will have a lovely dame,
Worthy a hero and his fame.
The fact is in the very air
That they're a handsome, well matched pair.

When George gets married how the press
Will write him up, it can't do less;
This scion of the fourth estate
Has been its worker long and late,
In pleasant and in stormy days,
And will be sure to get its praise.

In ruby and in amber wine
We'll toast the pair. Ay, 'twill be fine
To see them on their wedding day,
Fresh as two blooms of hawthorn spray,
Starting a journey not all mirth,
But just the best one of the earth,
Healthy and happy in their prime—
The Lord be with them through all time!
Peace and the robust one Good Cheer
To be their guests for many a year.

An Epic of Heaven

IDIOSYNCRASIES.

A SOLDIER of the Cross once had a dream,
After a battle, resting by a stream:
He saw, upon his way, an Infidel
With blood which flowed from wounds both
deep and fell,
A hand quite powerless, and a dragging limb
That yielded but a burden sore to him,
Trying to reach the stream to quench his thirst.
The soldier felt like slaying him at first,
But drops like rain now falling from the sky
Caused him to turn a sudden glance on high;
And in the blue—'twas clear—he saw a face
Bearded but lovely, with a divine grace,
Whose lips still smiled and spoke to him: "Oh
spare
Thy brother; what thou hast that let him share!"
And strange about the soldier it may seem
That when he woke he thought it not a dream.



THE WASHINGTON STATUE.

Erected at the Williamsburgh Bridge Plaza
through the generosity of ex-Congressman
James R. Howe.

An Epic of Heaven

IN th' wondrous gallery of famous men
Which Time, Creation's artist, hath turned
out,
Not one of them of greater worth we ken
Born to vicissitudes of faith and doubt,
Not one whose mission splendid was to rout
King George's government for Liberty's
To compare with Washington, who could mount
The high hills of men's hopes, enjoy the breeze
And view America and her destinies.

He saw the liberal sunshine o'er the hills,
Which promise gave to all of work and hope;
And he beheld the tyranny which kills,
Become oppressive, that would slyly grope
And strangle free thought by its narrow scope,
Swelling the world with all of fret and care,
That taxes, without freedom, was a rope
Of rotten strands, too fragile to ensnare,
Unable to hold pioneers anywhere.

The glorious risings of those soul-tried times!
The episode at Boston when was thrown
The tea in harbor. Independence chimes
And Patrick Henry's voice are northward
blown—

The news of Lexington has southward flown!
Brave colonies! in efforts hard and long,
'Mid foes in ambush and those better known,
Staunch bulwarks! and advance guard, good
and strong,
To all republics, struggling against wrong.

An Epic of Heaven

The Valley Forge of hunger and of cold,
Of bleeding feet in snow, 'mid bleak distress,
Shall never in our minds and hearts grow old,
But ever claim our grateful tenderness.
The General and his ill-clad men we bless;
For love of right they battled long and sore;
We thank them for their fortitude and stress.
Men of great parts! how lovingly we pore
O'er history that your gallant deeds explore!

When victory came, securing well earned peace,
The conqueror of Cornwallis bade farewell
Unto his armies, to enjoy a lease
Of quiet citizenship. But it fell
To him to be selected, to excel
As our first President; to uphold the state,
A watchful, faithful, fortunate sentinel,
In every function to be truly great,
A knightly man, one of the kings of fate.

Here hath been built memorial eloquent
To remind people of his work and fame.
This man of men most opportunely sent
Within God's providence to earn a name
Second to none—all patriots to aflame.
And while we look upon his effigy
In lasting bronze, this man of giant frame,
With two-fold gratification may we see
In its proportions fame and form agree.

An Epic of Heaven

A GOOD NIGHT TO SORREL.

MUSING to-night on former years,
The war unto my eyes appears
And 'mid its memories—hopes and fears—
My mind goes back to Sorrel.

That faithful war steed's now no more,
That me through dangers safely bore,
Yea, through the raids and battles' roar;
For dauntless was good Sorrel.

When the war ended, his fine head
He laid upon earth's chilly bed,
And soon he slumbered with the dead;
And so breath left poor Sorrel.

Why did he so ignobly die?
He that so oft heard bullets fly,
While shells burst through the sulphurous sky;
Ay, why did they spare Sorrel?

Stout horse! he bore me o'er the soil,
On many a weary march of toil,
While the hot sun made the blood boil;
But through it all went Sorrel.

He oft has chased guerilla bands
O'er ditches wide and swampy lands,
And helped to fetter traitors' hands;
For swift was my good Sorrel.

An Epic of Heaven

He, too, has charged with flying feet,
And followed up the dire retreat,
Where the rebels got so badly beat;
Ay, you were there, brave Sorrel!

Poor horse! you're now at peace. The strife
Of man no more affects your life,
That with all nobleness was rife;
And so good night, brave Sorrel!



THE COMFORTER.

THAT shadows fall upon the soul of men,
Under monotony of suns and stars,
Cannot gainsaid be by philosophy,
Yet know we they are shadows—nothing real.
Minds are not made of clay or putty, to
Be shaped by every trifling circumstance,
The Builder shaped each vessel for a sea
Unknown but partly to another one,
Nor can an accident, or incident,
Take from each one the freight he gladly bears,
That from the Father comes to each one born,
The glorious ingrain heritage of all.
The spiritual illumination, that
From the development of the upper brain,
Is at man's trying hour the Comforter
That lights him onward to the realms of bliss.

An Epic of Heaven

THE ROCK ROAD.

Watchung, New Jersey.

HAST ever been blessed with a summer
abode,
A cottage or bungalow on the Rock road?
A tired one's paradise, lovely and calm,
With rural advantage of field and sky farm.

The songsters of woodland and meadow com-
bine,
With human sojourners, to make it divine.
A life-giving breeze, seen and felt everywhere,
Shakes the perfume from trees in the exquisite
air.

The Rock road has different levels to go;
Some steep, and some easy, all curved to go
slow.
A serpentine ascent, to give exercise,
The traveler enjoying the scene of each rise.

The people who dwell there are earnestly great
Lovers of nature; it augments each estate.
One hardly may blame them, in scenes fresh
and gay,
To feel they are rich as the hours pass away.

An Epic of Heaven

THE SPARROWS.

OUTSIDE my garret window there's a roof,
And there the lively sparrows love to
come,
These wintry days, eager to get a crumb.
Though feathered warm, in brown and gray,
not proof
Are they 'gainst hunger. From a ledge aloof
They flurry down, alert and frolicsome;
And then, again, they're sober-eyed and glum,
Anxious that I should give for their behoof.
They are abused by some, I freely own;
And when I gave food I have seen them flare
Away a while, as if they had a fear
Of unexpected harm; but ne'er a stone
Would I throw at these gossips of the air,
That this dull weather fills with chatty cheer.



HELICON.

A POET bound for distant Helicon,
To quaff the nectar of its many springs,
A draft of which lays bare the soul of things,
O'ertook another deviously wandering on.
Approving not such waywardness, he said:
"Straight have I come through jungle, city,
mire,

An Epic of Heaven

And makes the homeliest things look soft and fair.

The corn stands in the shock for winter's food,
The cows graze lazily along the stream,
The distant mountains now much nearer seem
Than when the summer heats did o'er them brood.

The growing colt frisks gayly through the field,
Nor thinks of toil in store for him and me;
A sluggish feeling calms our energy
And makes the mind to dreamy fancies yield.
Over the well won trophied autumn's shield
The Indian summer spreads its tapestry.



ON THE NILE.

'T WAS on the Nilus, waiting for the wind
To favor sail—impatient to be gone—
John Christian said, "O this is most unkind!
Let's pray the wind to change that we may
on."

Hassan Mohamet, of the boat, replied:

"Let us content in that it blows aright."

"Nay," said the other, with no wish to bide,

"We want a diff'rent wind—this looks like
spite."

Hassan Mohamet said, "It may seem so;

But I have faith that God does shape the way,

An Epic of Heaven

Whether to North or South this wind may blow,
And makes it right for somebody to-day."
John Christian bow'd his head—he thought a
prayer—
And somehow dropp'd his selfish wishes there.



THE IMPRISONED ROBIN.

HE heard his cry this morning, and his
wail
Was like the sad song of the whippoorwill.
It may be in his prison cage he still
Hath memories of the fields; recalls the tale—
So sadly sweet, filling the wood and vale—
The lonesome night bird sang at vespers, till
He deems it is his own. His joyous thrill
And natural pipings seem to be in jail.
How different from his notes when, wild and
free,
He sang his happy greetings to his mate,
And pleasure seemed the business of his days!
No night bird's acts were mimicked in his ways
When he strode o'er the lawn in pride elate,
Or filled the air with melody from a tree.

An Epic of Heaven

ON THE HUDSON.

THE glow of perfect day unconscious lies
O'er Hudson's wide expanse this autumn
tide,
When Nature's banners, streaming far and
wide,
Are mirrored in its waters with the dyes
Of Indian summer's painting—darks and
brighths—
Enveloping the prospect, till we seem
Wrapped in the splendors of an Orient dream.
O River! whose soft waves reflect all lights,
By farm and palace where mankind may
dwell,
Happier than by the Shannon, Thames, or
Rhine,
Could I have but a cottage to call mine
On thine enchanting banks, it would be well;
Where musing, from earth's tumults I'd be free
To watch thy peaceful journey to the sea.



A TAWNY HEAD FROM EGYPT.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Central Park,
N. Y.

THERE rude curiosity cannot e'en debase
It rests, this marvel from the antique
land

An Epic of Heaven

Of pyramid and sphinx, and palm and sand,
(With tufts of hair, warm-bronze, within a
case,)

An illustration of the dominant race
That swayed the world for centuries, and that
planned

'Archives of art and catacombs to stand
'Gainst all Time's efforts laboring to efface.
These sightless sockets once with love-light
shone;

This brow command has given men among,
And with its intellect may have given tone
To governments—ay, even touched our own;
While lips, that might have greeted wife and
young,
Are now with brain that thought, with voice
that sung.



CONTINUITY.

OUR honored parent would be ninety now,
Though many a lengthened year has
passed away
Since in death's harvest he was gathered,
gray,
Having had enough, no doubt, to fret his brow.
I never deem him dead, but still endow
Him with all faculties in vigorous play;
With aspirations in their fullest sway;

An Epic of Heaven

And fruitful works that hang upon life's bough.

Each year I add a new year to his days:
The difference is but living here or there
In that great country where they never die,
But evermore are youthful in their ways;
No wrinkles fret from labor or from care,
For all soul-longings blossom in the sky.



THE ANGELUS.

TWO simple souls stopped by a peal of bells,
Amid the evening shades softly descending,
As homeward from their daily labor wending,
They pause to pray while the sweet cadence swells;
Two souls sincere, though lacking in book sense.
But knowing well the world invisible,
Listening, they hear more than the solemn knell
Of sounding chimes to wake their reverence;
So worshipping and spiritual they appear.
Devout brain fibres of the very life
Are stimulated in the man and wife,
And they love God and feel the heavenly sphere;
They have no science raising mental mists
To blind the truth divine, that God exists.

An Epic of Heaven

THE HARP OF WHITTIER.

SOME chords, which seemed from a celestial lyre,
Found long ago by a New England boy,
Were by him made into a harp, his joy,
On which he played in rapture tones of fire.
Knowing the source from which had came its strings,
He consecrated it to right 'gainst wrong,
Against slavery of every sort its song;
The brotherhood of man it grandly rings.
Full-grown the man forsook not the great task,
And much of love of country and home life
Are sweeter for his songs, which are so rife
In offering wisdom in its sunniest bask.
Now past the confines of the earth he sees
The stars immortal o'er the cypress trees.



A POET—TENNYSON.

BRAIN fibred all for poesy, in this
Slow humdrum age of science, work he
would
Creating noble forms on which he could
Bestow a worth immortal. Granite, gneiss

An Epic of Heaven

And sandstone of the mind, all gave him bliss
Inspired with soul of beauty, brotherhood;
Then consciously, yet modestly, he stood
Enlarging right and joy that none need miss.
Wrought by his glowing faculties, manifold,
Old ruins changed to homes for singing birds;
Sleepers of old romance new life began;
The glories of the future were unrolled;
Fair women dead again spoke golden words,
And songs were born to cheer the perfect man.



TWO WREATHS FOR GLASNEVEN.

I DREAMED two wreaths I brought into
Glasneven
To place upon two graves, well honored
there;
Graves of great hearts who did the work of
heaven
Striving for equal rights against despair.
Awaking, I remembered one had fought
To free his countrymen oppressed for creed,
And never wearied till what he had sought
Was gained at last, so grandly did he plead.
The other was a stubborn patriot, yet
The leader and the master of a band
Of men, love-bound, fighting that they might
get
All freemen's rights for their beloved land.

An Epic of Heaven

Speed, shadowy wreaths, to deck the
mounds where dwell
The mortal parts of O'Connell and Parnell.



THE WOOD THRUSH'S SONG.

OFT have I listened to thy song, sweet bird,
Trying to learn it so that I might sing
It to myself long after in the fling
And turmoil of the city, but a word
Or note I learn not; thine enraptured strain,
So filled with beauty, strength and cadences,
Has with it so much tree, and lawn, and breeze,
And consonance, that all my task's in vain.
As difficult to learn it as the song
Made by the streamlet down the mountain
side,
Rising and lowering in a rhythmic slide,
Tinged by the zephyrs which the sounds pro-
long;
But, like to it, it lingers when away,
Within the mind, and haunts us many a day.



TO THE PLANET JUPITER.

MAGNIFICENT orb, great Jupiter! that
With regal splendors glow the
evening skies,
Paling red Mars, that soon to sink he lies

An Epic of Heaven

Beyond our ken—the dark West caverns at,
Bright one, dimming the constellations' trail,
Whether accompanied by five moons or more,
Whether cooled off or fiery thine outpour,
In thy supremacy thou wilt not fail
To be the planet sphere of majesty!
And, certes, thou'st to be the interpreter,
Unto the worshipful astronomer,
To much unknown now in our solar sea;
While nations yet unborn shall in thee find
An object of sublimity to the mind.



WARD'S SHAKSPEARE.

Central Park, N. Y.

HERE can we see the Poet's noble brow
That cheers the Centuries!—a great spacious tower,
Showing mankind, what darkly was ere now,
The native source of his supernal power.
The long black mystery is there cleared away;
We no more can marvel since this is here,
Why his mental photographs are the sway—
The glory of the world—without a peer;
Or, why he magically read the heart,
And with clairvoyant vision saw through all
The workings of the mind, in every part,
Be it in king, or clown, or great, or small,—

An Epic of Heaven

Pshaw! such a face and head on man to-day
Could make great Hamlet but a schoolboy's
play.



THE CATBIRD'S SONG.

MA-YAA, ma-yaa," I hear the catbird cry-
ing
From out the thicket during day's warm
hours,
When partly resting his melodious powers,
Near cornfields waving in the zephyr's sighing.
But hear him in the morning hours rejoice,
In middle summer, when his young are grow-
ing!
Behold him then from yonder spruce spire
throwing
His melody about in marvellous voice!
Alto, soprano, mezzo, high and low.
How frolicsome this homely fellow's notes
Break on the ear; and hear him when he
quotes
From other birds, the rascal mimics so.
And he improves the others' trill or call,
For if he only tries, he beats them all.

An Epic of Heaven

THE PORTRAIT.

HOW like a placid morning is this face,
So full of healthfulness and rosy light,
The eyes filled full of tenderness, and bright
With an expression showing inward grace.
Yet closer look, and see that line on line
Hath Time engraved upon this countenance
Of trial and struggle, which may e'en enhance
The beauty of these lovely forms divine.
The morning landscape in the sunshine dress'd
Once past the fearful storm which shook the
earth,
Looks calmly now, after its rain-washed birth,
In all the glory of its beauty blest;
And, though about are many marks which tell
Of the storm's doings, yet is it not well?



CHRISTMASTIDE.

PEACE and good will toward men! Blest
Christmastide
That brings to famished thousands a good
meal;
While even those immured in cells, that steal
From others for a livelihood, now bide
At tables loaded with the best of fare.

An Epic of Heaven

Children unused to luxuries and joys
Now have abundance, are e'en bless'd with toys,
For did not Christ take such unto His care?
The laborer sick, his family hungry, cold,
Is now remembered; wood and coal, and rent,
And flour and meal, and fowl to him are sent
By them that know the genuine use of gold;
Whose eyes have seen the shepherds watch
by night,
Or read the Sermon on the Mount aright.



RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

COULD I depict the marvel of thy lines
I would be almost equal to thyself;
So content I must be to admire thy pelf
Of Nature's coinage that thy skill entwines
Through all thy sayings, prophecies and pasts.
Thy mind can claim equality with them,
The giant seers and poets, that like masts,
Well rigged and sailed, are set 'twixt bow and
stem
On earth's great deck, inciting mankind on
To emulate their spreading sails of thought,
While breezes from the purer spheres are
brought
To swell the canvas, that the weak may con,
The strong wax stronger, the rose grow more
red,
And the material man rise from the dead.

An Epic of Heaven

WASHINGTON ROCK, NEW JERSEY.

HERE on this giant rock, backed by this
wood,
He viewed the hostile red coats of the foe,
Led by Cornwallis on the plains below,
Noting their movements, while concealed he
stood.

What a vast prospect was before his eyes,
Where now fair plains and pleasant towns
abound!
Yonder's the gray of Staten Island Sound,
And here the Raritan low winding lies.

New Brunswick's but a dozen jumps, you'd
think,
O'er there the towers of Brooklyn Bridge so
tall;
Yonder stands Liberty enlightening all;
And there's the gusty ridge of Navesink.

How varied are the scenes which spread be-
low,
Where Washington once stood and watched
the foe.

An Epic of Heaven

CREATION.

A SINGING bird one day upon a spray
Seemed happy for the pleasure in his
heart
The singing gave him. So let the poet im-
part
His song of many chords in his own way,
Whether of cheer, or dole, of fact, or fay.
And although sometimes singing to the mart,
With love of approbation in his art,
What matter if true music's in his lay?
Songs from his inner self abroad are tossed;
A hearing for these winged souls he be-
speaks;
And whereso'er he goes, listeners he seeks,
As otherwise their melody might be lost,
A thinker said, in words of high sequence,
"A poet must create an audience."



WARM DAYS IN DECEMBER.

THE warmth hangs o'er the naked, bare-
limbed woods,
Enmantling them in garments of blue haze;
And even the ruts made by the springtime
floods
When that Apollo with his golden rays

An Epic of Heaven

Sent melted snow in runlets down the hills
And watersheds, swelling the little streams
To treble their capacity of rills,
Appear like ancient gold with ruddy gleams.
Some vigorous maples yet retain their leaves,
Proud of their mottled dress of fading sheen ;
And the slow-running brook his way yet weaves
By fir and myrtle, and through sods yet green.
Some migratory birds in cosy nooks yet stray
Where sheltered glades abound and south winds
play.



JOHN BROWN.

NATURE has her own way to move man-
kind,
Taking for heroes righteous ones of earth,
Clothed in the ruggedness of right from
birth,
Of radical proclivities which bind
Fast to the task she teaches they must do,
And wealth, nor ease, nor beauty ever frees
Them from the work which warms their ener-
gies.
Their raiment may be rough, their food part
rue,
Their pilgrimage on earth be 'mid despair ;
They may be called fanatic, fool, or worse,
And their intentions may be deemed a curse

An Epic of Heaven

To shatter much in life thought good and fair;
Yet working for the right they miss God's
frown,—
The shackles of each slave were on John
Brown.



STORY'S SEMIRAMIS.

THERE in a modern city sittest thou,
The queen that some four thousand years
ago
Had built the walls of Babylon; thy fair brow
Crowned with Assyria's jewels; a great foe,
'And conquering princess, that brought 'neath
thy sway
Persia and Egypt, and their mighty force,
And north to where Caucasus stood at bay,
And east to where the Indus found its source,
Within the present age again thou'st won.
The Teuton, Anglo-Saxon, Celt and Dane,
And children of them all, a race begun,
Acknowledge thy great powers, accept thy
reign,
'And crowd the portals of the courtly scene
Where, in thy wondrous beauty, thou art queen.

An Epic of Heaven

THE MONTH OF MONTHS.

THE air is teeming with the life of June;
The insects hum about the fragrant grass;
The robin and the catbird pipe in tune,
And the wood sparrow cheers the wild morass.
The distant hill-tops seem to lie serene
Within the sunshine of the glorious day,
Like Eden's mountains lovely in the sheen
Of Paradise's splendor far away.
The roses' perfume from the garden wall,
The clover's breath from the green meadow
near,
The bobolincoln with his flirting call,
The pleasant atmosphere, blue, dry, and clear;
Yes, all the living things which sing or croon
Proclaim thee of all months the sweetest, June.



ON THE FRONTIER.

TWO giant minds have stamped the mental
world,
Instructors of our times and times to be;
Toiling to bring mankind to harmony,
Smoke from each study on the frontier curled.
They searched more for finality than growth,
Not for the footprint but the thought of God,
They worshipped wisdom in the chastening
rod

An Epic of Heaven

That scars transgressors; and yet both
Felt Beauty as she moves through cycles vast,
And knew the hopefulness that cheers us here
In our promotion toward the perfect sphere;
They loved the future and esteemed the past.
Revere their lives, O man! for ne'er again
Will this old world contain two lovelier men.



EUGENE FIELDS—TERRÆ FILIUS.

WHAT sweeter epitaph can there be used
O'er any grave, let fame be great or
small,
Than what is true of him, and not abused?
"He was a friend of children, one and all."
O friend! who hath environed a new life,
I never saw to know you, but a sort
Of sympathetic fellow feeling, rife
With human ties, hath brought us in rapport.
A vacant place, impossible to fill,
Owing to the quaint flavor of his brain,
Was made when Death this Roman vase did
spill,
And so was lost rich wine to entertain.
In him the child and man were reconciled,
And in his death I pity every child.

An Epic of Heaven

THE WELL BROUGHT OVER FROM HOLLAND.

FRONTING a bluff beside the Tappan Zee,
Surrounded by green sward, bubbles a
spring

Wherein the traveler, or the bird on wing,
May quench his thirst and quaff cool purity.

Above, in Wolfert's Roost, once lived a King
Of Romance, he whose magic pen could bring
The Hudson Dutchman back for us to see,
The village vroom, or New Amsterdam grandee.

He drank of your sweet waters, humble fount,
And made you famous; even children tell
The whimsical story of the imported well.

You bubble merrily beneath Van Tassel's
mount

And wayfarers still seek you, for your fame,
And for the love of Diedrich Knickerbocker's
name.



SOME DIVINE STEPS.

THE essence of all things that dwells on
high,

To whom the human soul oft turns for balms,
Lets downward to the earth, in storms or
calms,

Steps which gives superb prospects to the sky,
And stimulate humanity to pry
Into Divinity—its suns and fanes.

An Epic of Heaven

Homer, that glorious step, how grand to try
And climb it! From Dante's step e'en the
 plains
Of the departed can be kenn'd. Shakespeare's
 Shows diversity in entirety. Milton's
Shows scenes sublime. Goethe's in beauty rears,
And lovely views give Burns' and Emerson's.
The needs of souls find here and there a rise
 Of steps divine to help them to the skies.



MY HORSE.

MY horse I sometimes think of; where is he?
 Companion in the war for many a day,
His graceful, glossy flanks of ruby bay,
His delicate head, with eyes that beamed on me
Good-naturedly and friendly, or in plea?
 Fleet-limbed and full of courage for the fray,
Enduring in the march, though long the way;
Through hunger, dust, and thirst; where may
 he be?
I doubt he lives. Myself am somewhat gray,
And man has twice the travel of a horse.
I'm glad I think of him without remorse,
 For kindly was he used in service long.
I'm glad we parted friends; I heard his neigh
Over the peach field, like a farewell song!

An Epic of Heaven

TO THE SHADE OF WOLT WHITMAN.

THOU lover of the cosmos vague and vast,
In which thy virile mind would penetrate
Unto the rushing, primal springs of fate,
Ruling alike the future, present, past;
Now, having breasted waves beyond death's
blast,
New Neptune's steeds saluted, white and
great,
And entered through the glorious Golden
Gate,
And gained the fair celestial shores at last,
Still worship'st thou the Ocean? thou that tried
To comprehend its mental roar and surge,
Its howling as of victory, and its dirge
For continents submerged by shock and tide.
By that immortal ocean now what cheer?
Do crews patrol and save the same as here?



NEW YORK CITY.

SITTING at rest, great city of the West,
Almost surrounded by strait, river, bay;
Absorbing all that come and with thee stay;
Making true lovers of earth's very best,
Who cannot praise thee too much in their zest.
Old Hendrick Hudson could not in his day
Dream of this growth so great; for then blue
jay

An Epic of Heaven

And forest birds abounded, and could nest.

At times thou seemest too soft and easy going.
Giving thy sons and daughters too free times;

But when they go too far thou makest them
smart;

Rewarding them who good deeds have been
growing,

Punishing them found guilty of foul crimes.

Beneath thy vesture beats a great, kind heart.



PASSED OVER THE BRIDGE.

WATCHING, through vigils long, the arch
of light

Spanning the bridge, uniting cities large,

Who doubts his mind took note of all the
charge

Approaching dissolution with its blight

Had put upon him? Through the long sad
nights

He mused on life, death and eternity,

Beyond these shadows, where the soul would be

Enraptured at the glorious heavenly sights.

He thought of this and then he'd leave behind

To all the toil and duty of this life,

Their future meeting, far from earthly strife;

And, gazing on this arch, in his clear mind

In time he saw the bridge lights to that shore

Where pain, and death and sorrow come no
more.



An Epic of Heaven

BETTER THAN HE KNEW.

A BAD man in his garden found a weed
That caused him trouble, so he thought
he'd take
And cultivate it, so that he might make
It more a source of misery by its seed,
And thereby trouble neighbors, good and bad,
Much valued time he spent in labor hard,
Developing this thing in his back yard;
And when he deemed this noisome weed he had
Grown to perfection, as to smell and size,
To injure much his neighbor's cheerful
grounds,
When night had spread her mantle on his
rounds
He went, scattering its seeds. To his surprise
His culture had developed pleasing powers—
Each plant grew up the home of fragrant
flowers.



A MIDSUMMER THOUGHT.

WE love this earth, somehow, if young or
old;
And though 'tis often censured, still 'tis ours,
And though weeds multiply, it has its flowers,
With climates ranging wide from heat to cold;



An Epic of Heaven

And he must lack the mind's true scope who can
Go through all without a grateful thought
At the concordant comeliness that's wrought
On sea and shore, mountain and plain, for man.
Sometimes I think that earth will ever keep
Us chained unto its bosom, strangely wed;
That when unto dim eyes we may seem dead,
Our souls will still be active, not asleep,
But living in the essence; conscious, too,
That 'neath us is the sward, and over us the
blue.



THE POEM.

THOUGH singers are many, with songs of
cheer,
The poem's not born every day of the year.
Earth's corners are searched well to find the
seed,
And the finder thereof is rare indeed.

The rich or the poor, clear eyed or the blind,
One or the other the treasure will find:
Will give it a name—it has its own wings—
To start on the journey the comfort it brings.

An Epic of Heaven

BELLS OF MORNING.

EACH morning, as I lie in bed,
I hear a far-off bell's sweet tone
Welcoming the day gleams, rosy red,
And telling me that night has flown.

So one, upon his dying bed,
Hears bells of a celestial tone
Welcome the soul far overhead,
And telling him that death has flown.



NEVER SAW THE STARS.

WE read that "Ninus never saw the stars."
Rivers of gold were his and armies
great,
And jewels, wines and raiment to elate,
But these possessions were his eye sight's bars.

Those stars, which beautify the upper court,
Should we neglect for lamps of gain and
spoil?

Better the beacon guiding honest ships
Than wreckers' torch at an unworthy port.
Better the Polar star in steady moil,
Than comet flaming in erratic dips.

An Epic of Heaven

MUSIC.

ALL things had reached creation, but stood
still,
Awaiting the Divine creative sign
To move with life eternal; and His will
Chose music for the signal, gift divine!



A VILLAGE MAID.

MYRA hath beauties pleasant to behold;
Her silken crown's adornment for a
queen;
Her eyes are windows where the soul is seen;
Her mind's a store of treasure, good as gold;
Her heart is to be won, you say, not sold.

Never before beneath earth's arching skies
Was such enchantment in a maiden's eyes;
And yet she's in the market to be sold.
Never was village maiden such a prize,
Who bids? Bid high, in love, not gold.



BOOK CATALOGUES.

BOOK catalogues: I here confess
Their publishers I often bless.
My modest purse may be too thin
To buy the treasures named therein;

An Epic of Heaven

The giant names I love not less.
Books from the era of Queen Bess,
Marlowe and Shakespeare in new dress;
Abbott or Addison may begin
Book catalogues.
Big names or little, nevertheless
I muse on what each may express;
In cloth, morocco, or calfskin,
Ah, how I love to read within!
Knowledge is there, and cheerfulness;
Book catalogues.



GOD.

WHAT giveth its taste to the cucumber?
What bestoweth perfume on the helio-
trope?
What with beauty endoweth the maiden?
What with stars doth enjewel the midnight?
What food groweth in the beards of the wheat?
Say Nature, Evolution, what you will,
But how much simpler is the grand word, God!



ONE DAY.

DEATH came along one day
And asked his pay:
The life of a child.

An Epic of Heaven

In this world, right and left,
Parents are thus bereft,
The child but smiled.

Shall we, too, smile,
And after a while
Be reconciled?



THEOLOGY.

WORSHIP of God is laudable;
His truest name is audible,
So that the spirit ear may hear.

Hell is the fitting recompense
Of uncouth actions, lacking sense,
Stifling the laugh, causing the tear.

Heaven is the fruit of fruitfulness,
The answer of true life, to bless;
Work and development are here.



THE TREND TOWARD THE SKY.

SOME years ago a would-be seer pro-
claimed
That he was witness and he saw the sight

An Epic of Heaven

Of spirit form o'er sufferer, illness maimed,
And when death came he saw it take its flight.

This truth or fancy had a strata sound.
Of late X-ray experiments 'tis writ,
That when life left the body it was found
A shadow-substance rose and went from it.



BRAIN GONE ASTRAY.

BRAIN gone astray, he ends his earthly days,
And deems that life to him is ever over.
Do we, now left behind to blame or praise,
Believe the human soul can run to cover?



DESTINY.

WHETHER we see it in the lowly snake,
Or in the wisdom of the primal cause,
'Tis all the same—we sleep, and dream, and
wake
To opening vistas of earth's splendid laws.

Who now shall say that some of us are not
Held back in check, or moved to effort grand,
By power supreme, that we can never blot,
Or grasp in fullness or its force command?

An Epic of Heaven

ONE FAITHFUL LISTENER.

HE dipped his pen into his heart and wrote
Poems that few would hear or under-
stand ;

Like some wild song bird in a lonely land
Pouring abroad its sweet and soul-thrilled note.

And yet perchance on that untravelled way
Some unknown soul may greet him with a look
Of thanks intense for something in his book

That on the mind has thrown a sunny ray.
Better one faithful listener than a crowd
Of soulless ones, half-hearted, shouting loud.



THE RAINBOW.

THE rainbow, with its colors seven,
Makes the fairest arch of heaven
When the rain is nearly done
Opposite the shining sun.



A NEW YEAR'S NIGHT OF LONG AGO.

ONE New Year's night of long ago
I heard the ringing bugles blow
Over the wide Virginia field,

An Epic of Heaven

Which we and war had forced to yield,
At times camp ground and frozen bed;
At times a burial for our dead.

One New Year's night of long ago
I heard theattoo bugles blow,
Artillery and cavalry,
So different, yet in harmony.
Their music I can ne'er forget;
I seem to hear them ringing yet!

Gone are the brave who held that field
Across whose frost the bugles pealed;
Comrades are they in tents more white
Than marked Virginia's soil that night.
Yet as on that night of long ago
I hear once more the bugles blow.

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